

**REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2012**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, February 6, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Absent: Councilor Manousos.

Also present: RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager, Paul Hutcheon, Director of Central CT Health District, Chairperson of CCTHD Sartucci, Park and Recreation Director Kathy Bagley, Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk and Jeff Bridges, Town Manager.

Councilor Roberts led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO ADD THREE ITEMS TO THE AGENDA:**

- 1. B.5.a Ordinance Repealing Chapter 37, Sale of Town Property;**
- 2. B.6.b Special Meeting Minutes dated January 23, 2012; and**
- 3. B.6.c Special Meeting Minutes dated January 30, 2012.**

seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Central Connecticut Health District Report – Presented by Director Paul Hutcheon and Chairperson Sartucci.

Councilor Kotkin asked that if in addition to inspecting restaurants, he asked if food markets were also inspected after the storms.

Paul Hutcheon responded that food markets are also inspected.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there were any issues in Wethersfield following both of the storms.

Paul Hutcheon responded that there were issues. He noted that there are 500 licensed food establishments in the district and that the vast majority follows the rules, but on occasion there are few who try to save money and operate.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the Health District received any complaints from residents.

Paul Hutcheon responded that it did not.

Overview of Boating Infrastructure Grant – Presented by Kathy Bagley.

Kathy Bagley explained that the grant will provide improvements at the Cove Park operations at the boat launch and the grant will help to completely replace the docks with floating docks and to help partially with the dredging operation at the access into the Cove itself. Another part of the grant is to encourage day visitors to visit the community and provide facilities or moorings for them.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if the residents surrounding the Cove will be kept updated on what's going on.

Kathy Bagley responded that the residents have been kept updated.

Jeff Bridges noted that there have been some questions regarding the match and how it works and asked if she could explain how the matching funds work.

Kathy Bagley explained that the Town gave Parks & Recreation permission to hire a consultant to work on the grant with them and the consultant had asked Parks & Recreation to submit to the consultant a lot of the work that was previously and currently done because for the initial grant application, Parks & Recreation was able to work that type of work for the site work done, maintenance done, time staff put in, as part of the match for the grant. The Town had already expended funds for this match and was able to demonstrate that the Town had spent \$298,000 of in kind services in work done at the Cove.

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Hearings

An ordinance authorizing application for the Emergency Management Performance Grant: Federal funding passed through the State of Connecticut to support and enhance local emergency management capabilities.

No one spoke – Hearing closed.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue, commented on the Referendum: maintenance issues, increasing parking spaces when no one has asked for additional parking.

Robert Young 20 Coppermill Road, commented on the appropriation approved at the last meeting and Governor Malloy's intention on opening additional charter schools in Connecticut.

Tony Martino, 374 Highland Street, commented on the bond project and if the referendum is passed, the bond will become a Town project and is administered by the Town. He also gave a reminder for the UNICO Macaroni Dinner on Sunday, February 12.

Kim Robinson, 57 Stillman Road, commented on the Board of Education's request for all day kindergarten and noted that she does not support an all day kindergarten program, research does not support it and urged the Council not to support full day kindergarten.

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented on the cost of the high school renovation and questioned the wisdom of spending this kind of money.

Barbara Ruhe, 79 Main Street, commented on unfunded mandates and the State Government as reason for some of the monetary problems in Connecticut.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Hurley reported for the Historical Society, which ended the year with a \$20,000 deficit and are looking for new ways of fundraising and increasing membership. He also reported for Shared Services, which is in the process of setting up a meeting with the Board of Education to try to combine some services. He also reported for the Budget & Finance Committee, for Councilor Manousos, which reviewed the comprehensive Finance Report put together by Susan Smith which included additional information that has been in the past, a clean audit and eight recommendations for enhancing the Town's internal patrol, in which five were implemented and three are in the process of being implemented.

Councilor Roberts asked how the Historical Society's deficit compares to other years.

Councilor Hurley responded that there have been issues for the past five years.

Councilor Drake reported for the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee, which has completed its work and it now moves to Planning & Zoning and their budget is \$1.2 million, the same as last year and he noted that the road funds are \$880,000. He also reported on other projects being worked on. He reported for the Infrastructure Committee which discussed two ordinances regarding the sale of property. He reported for the Library Committee which is putting together a preliminary 2012-2013 budget and are waiting for guidance from the Finance Committee regarding pension and insurance. He reported for the Ad Hoc Pavement Committee, which is made up of Town staff, the Capitol Improvement Advisory Committee, the Infrastructure Committee and VHB Consulting, to review what has been done with roads and the money.

Councilor Kotkin reported for the Insurance Committee, and noted that the Town continues to run below estimates for health care expenses. There has also been discussion regarding putting together something which would reward employees for following healthy habits.

Councilor Drake reported for the School Building Project Committee. They have looked into how, in other towns, school building committees work with PACs [political action committees].

Chairperson Hemmann reported that she attended a Special Meeting with the Board of Education last week in an effort to open lines of communication; she also attended the Planning, Conservation and Development meeting last week and the Board of Education Budget meeting.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Console commented on the Wethersfield Police Department capturing the church bandit, and that he attended the Housing Authority meeting. He also spoke of the Board of Education meeting and corrected a terminology that he had used at a previous meeting of “fading” which should have been “fade out.” With regards to the maintenance issue at the schools, he had asked the Board of Education for a record of all maintenance work orders, and due to a computer glitch, the Board of Education has had a problem with getting these records together but are working on it. He also thanked Jeff Bridges for bringing Council up to date on the issue with the 706 Nott Street foreclosure property.

Councilor Drake thanked Kim Robinson for her information on the all day kindergarten issue.

Councilor Kotkin noted that he had reviewed the list of items from the Capitol Improvement Advisory Committee, and wanted to bring to everyone’s attention one part of the Town that needs attention is the exterior area (parking lot, tennis court nets) around Webb School and the interior windows at Webb School.

Councilor Roberts commented on the passing of Frank Meunier, a Wethersfield resident that had recently passed away. Mr. Meunier was blind, but hadn’t let that stand in his way and contributed a lot to Wethersfield.

Councilor McAlister reported that the Wethersfield Police Department is holding a Penguin Plunge on Saturday, February 25 at Crystal Lake in Middletown to benefit Special Olympics.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Jeff Bridges reported that CRRA has auctioned their electricity for next year, but the revenue from electricity has gone down from the current 7.17 cents per kilowatt to 3.5 cents per kilowatt which is an indication of the economy and that the price of natural gas is low and reducing the cost to generate energy. He noted that with the issue between MDC and CRRA on the plan operations and those employees, 49 of the employees stayed with MDC and 21 came over to the new operator. He noted that this is significant because as you look at the overhead costs for the employees who used to work at the plant for MDC, the towns are responsible for those costs. He also reported that 2013-2014 is a re-valuation year for the Town, which is a statistical update rather than a full re-valuation including visiting each property.

COUNCIL ACTION

1. Ordinances, Resolutions and Appointments for Action

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF BETTE A. BOTTICELLO, 35 DEERFIELD ROAD, FROM THE HISTORIC COMMISSION and TO APPOINT MARK A. RAYMOND, 323 HARTFORD AVENUE, TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FROM AN ALTERNATE TO FULL MEMBER FOR THE TERM 2-6-2012 THROUGH 6-30-2015 and TO APPOINT PAUL E. COURCHAIINE, 481 MAIN STREET TO THE HISTORIC COMMISSION AS AN ALTERNATE TO FILL A VACANCY FOR THE TERM 2-6-2012 THROUGH 6-30-2013,”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPOINT THOMAS R. PENTALOW, 66 BOULTER ROAD, TO THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOR THE TERM 02-06-2012 THROUGH 06-30-2016; TO APPOINT ALEX VASEL, 44 RUTLEDGE ROAD, TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AS AN ALTERNATE FOR THE TERM 02-06-2012 THROUGH 06-30-2014; “TO APPOINT JODI LATINA, 29 BLUEBERRY HILL, TO THE BOARD OF ETHICS AS AN ALTERNATE, FOR THE TERM 02-06-2012 THROUGH 06-30-2013; TO APPOINT MARK KULMACZ, 37 OLD PEWTER LANE, TO THE INLAND WETLANDS AND WATER COURSES COMMISSION AS AN ALTERNATE, FOR THE TERM 02-06-2012 THROUGH 06-30-2012; TO APPOINT THOMAS MULL, 159 SURREY DRIVE, TO THE PARKS & RECREATION BOARD AS AN ALTERNATE, FOR THE TERM 02-06-2012 THROUGH 06-30-2012”** seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console, moved **“TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING APPLICATIONS TO THE STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER,”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported each year the Town applies for and receives a State of Connecticut Emergency Management Performance Grant. This grant is Federal funding that the State receives to support the emergency management functions in communities with the purpose of sustaining and enhancing local emergency management capabilities. The award amount is based on a per capita formula and must be matched by the Town. Each year the application is based on a portion of the Emergency Management Director’s salary and cell phone service, both of which are already budgeted. The per capita allocation for FFY 2012 will be \$.50 cents per capita (same as FFY 2012). Town Council must authorize the Town Manager to apply for and accept the grant.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF PARKS AND RECREATION ESCROW FUNDS THAT WERE DESIGNATED FOR FILTER REPLACEMENT AT THE WILLARD POOL FOR VARIOUS POOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AT WILLARD POOL AND MILL WOODS POOL,”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported last February the Town Council authorized spending of up to \$88,000 from the Parks and Recreation Escrow Fund to replace the failed filters at Willard Pool. The new filters were installed for the 2011 summer pool season and there is a fund balance of \$36,787. Staff has identified projects at the pools that will improve the efficiency of the pools filter operations, keep up with general maintenance of our pools and save funds in chlorine costs for Mill Woods.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor McAlister, moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF \$7,124 FROM THE COTTONE RENTAL FUND TO THE COTTONE FIELD LIGHTING PROJECT,”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Jeff Bridges reported two unanticipated costs were encountered during this project; an underground junction box (\$3,891) and circuit breakers for the new lighting system (\$3,600). The Cottone Rental Fund has a current balance of \$10,500. The Cottone Lights Fundraising Committee has recommended taking the additional funds of \$7,124 for the lights out of this account. This will complete the project.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the funds in the Cottone Rental Fund come from renting out the facility with the lights.

Kathy Bagley responded that the funds come from when the facility is rented out.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the funds have increased since installing the lights.

Kathy Bagley responded that the facility has not been rented out since the lights have been installed. They wanted to be sure everything functioned correctly before renting the lighted field.

Councilor Montinieri asked if there is any connection between the rental fund and any other costs going forward.

Kathy Bagley responded that there is not. When the field is rented out, the funds go into a fund that goes back into the field.

Councilor Kotkin asked how the lights worked in the first season.

Kathy Bagley responded that the lights worked great.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that it was his understanding that with the funds that were received, everything was within budget, but now there are these two issues.

Kathy Bagley responded that they were right on target with the initial budget, but then these two items were totally unanticipated.

Councilor Drake commented that the circuit breakers were too big and needed to be brought down to a level that could handle the lights.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Kotkin, moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND EXECUTE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS FOR A MUNICIPAL QUICKSPEND ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM GRANT FOR WINDOW REPLACEMENT AT THE PHYSICAL SERVICES BUILDING,”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

RaeAnn Palmer reported that the Town received an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant to complete the window replacement project at the Pitkin Community Center. Staff is requesting permission to apply for funds for window replacement.

Chairperson Hemmann asked if this would be done only if the Town receives the grant.

RaeAnn Palmer responded this was correct, and it does not require any match from the Town.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there is anything available to help with the interior windows at Webb Elementary School.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the Town had applied for, in the competitive round of this money for the windows at Webb but were not successful. She noted that she has not seen anything since that time for the windows.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if the windows at the Police Department have all been fixed.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the windows at the Police Department have been fixed.

Deputy Mayor Console asked for a estimate of what it would cost to replace the windows at

Webb School.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the estimate would be anywhere between \$800,000 and \$1 million.

Councilor Drake noted that when the Physical Services building was redone, there hadn't been anything that wasn't done that had been asked for, and he questions why the windows would need to be replaced.

RaeAnn Palmer responded she does not know.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Hurley, moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE SALE BY AUCTION OF A 1999 FORD TAURUS, A TIRE MACHINE, A COMPRESSOR, OLD STYLE POLICE LIGHTS AND BRACKETS, A TRUCK SEAT AND AN EMISSIONS ANALYZER,"** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported this is equipment that is no longer used and can bring additional funds from the sale for the future purchase of equipment.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

BIDS

None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Ordinance Repealing Chapter 37, Sale of Town Property be it Ordained that Part II General Legislation of the Code of Wethersfield is hereby amended by repealing Chapter 37 and replacing it with the following: Chapter 37, Sale of Town Property.

MINUTES

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 17, 2012"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO APPROVE THE JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND BOARD OF EDUCATION OF JANUARY 23, 2012"** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 30, 2012”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors McAlister, Roberts ABSTAINED. The motion passed 6-0-2.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue, commented on the cost of the repair with the Cottone Field Circuit breakers. He also commented on issues on Morrison Avenue. He also commented that the street sign for Tifton Street sign is crooked and needs to be fixed.

Jim Clynch, 903 Ridge Road, commended RaeAnn Palmer for the work that she has done on behalf of the Town. He also commented that during the joint meeting with the Town Council and the Board of Education he felt it was unfair to allow someone at the podium to instruct the audience to stand up in support of what they were speaking about and the people, including himself who did not stand, were ridiculed.

Chairperson Hemmann thanked Mr. Clynch for bringing this to the Council’s attention.

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented on the issues of the lights, parents wanting their children to play sports “for the children,” road work, all day kindergarten.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented on Mr. Clynch’s comments, posters and banners being allowed at Council meetings, the matter of the windows at Webb School, questioned how many children was the Board of Education talking about for the full day kindergarten program at a cost of \$830,000.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:10 p.m., Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk
Approved by Vote of Council
February 21, 2012